

covers in excellent fashion the differential diagnosis of the acute abdomen. It affords the physician the background of information essential to evaluate an acute abdomen and to attain therapeutic judgment. It is small, compact, can be read with advantage in a few hours, and will serve as a handy reference book for student, general practitioner, and specialist alike. It is recommended for perusal or study by any physician encountering acute abdominal conditions in practice. It is a valuable contribution to medical literature and deserves to be in the library of practicing physicians.

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CHILDREN'S RADIOGRAPHIC TECHNIC. By Forrest E. Shurtleff, R.T., The Children's Medical Center, Boston, Massachusetts. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia, 1951. 80 pages. 32 illustrations. \$3.75.

This modest volume is designed as an aid to technicians and physicians who are familiar with radiographic procedures in general but who, nevertheless, have difficulty in obtaining satisfactory films of the non-cooperative children whom they must occasionally examine. The author's experience is based upon a large number of studies at the Children's Medical Center in Boston.

The chief contribution of this book is a section of 25 pages quite thoroughly outlining rapid exposure techniques for different parts of the body and for children of varying ages. This section is worth more than the price of the book for those without the time or experience to make their own exposure charts.

There are a number of helpful suggestions for positioning and immobilizing small patients. There are good directions for obtaining rhinograms and tracheograms.

The volume does not quite fulfill the publisher's announcement that it is a thorough presentation of the radiographic studies of diseases and anomalies of children.

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A PRIMER FOR PSYCHOTHERAPISTS. By Kenneth Mark Colby, M.D., Adjunct in Psychiatry, Mount Zion Hospital; Clinical Associate, San Francisco Institute of Psychoanalysis. The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1951. 167 pages. \$3.00.

Like most technical procedures, psychotherapy is best learned under the supervision of an experienced therapist. The author of this little volume on psychotherapy admits that he is not presenting anything which is new and unique, but rather he addresses himself to beginners in this field: internists and residents in psychiatric hospitals and clinics, clinical psychologists, psychiatric social workers, and practicing psychiatrists (for the latter, obviously suggesting that they adopt methods and techniques recommended by him). He explains his approach as essentially psychoanalytic, but the actual procedures he describes are far from the orthodox classical psychoanalytic techniques in that communications from the patient are not so much free association, there is less emphasis on the interpretation of dreams, and the therapist, in general, is more "active." Following a brief description of basic theory, the organism, the ego, the environment, and the kind of patient who comes to the psychiatrist, the author emphasizes "in abstraction," the "most suitable" and the "less suitable" type for therapy, and the requirements and qualifications of a good psychotherapist. Such practical considerations as the length of interview, how to handle tardiness on the part of a patient, attempts of the patient to prolong the interview, the use of the couch, what to do when the patient weeps, when he offers gifts, whether or not to take notes during the interview, etc., are presented.

The technique of the first interview is described in detail with several simple clinical examples, with emphasis being on two aims, "to formulate from the facts a working clinical and dynamic diagnosis, and to acclimatize the patient to the interview methods and procedures of psychotherapeutic

work." To accept a patient for treatment is generally not difficult if the patient expresses a wish and need for treatment, but the author's examples of when he declines to treat some patients are not so convincing. Patients sometimes express a conscious unwillingness to continue under psychiatric care, but when this is adequately handled therapy may proceed. The author emphasizes, however, and rightfully so, that one should not threaten a patient into therapy. Very practical problems, such as what to do about a patient who requests a prescription for drugs and how to handle relatives, are discussed in a realistic and helpful fashion. The author regards the latter problem as a "mixed blessing," and he emphasizes that "no friend or relative of the patient in therapy should be seen by the therapist without the spoken knowledge and permission of the patient." The middle course of therapy is discussed in terms of the value of interpretations, how and when they are present, in what dosage, how resistance is handled and modified, and the meaning and handling of the "transference." The last chapter deals with the modified methods of treatment of the "schizophrenias." This is rather brief and sketchy, and refers essentially to those cases who are regarded as "ambulatory" or "latent" that one may see in office practice rather than in hospital work.

The author's style is simple and direct and without pretense. He emphasizes the limitations of psychotherapy, and warns the neophyte not to set his goals too high. This volume can be well recommended to the beginner in psychotherapy if he will constantly keep in mind that there is no substitute for supervision.

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ALLERGY IN RELATION TO PEDIATRICS. By Bret Ratner, M.D., Professor of Clinical Pediatrics (Allergy) and Associate Professor of Immunology, New York Medical College. An official publication of the American College of Allergists. Bruce Publishing Company, St. Paul, Minn., 1951. 228 pages, \$3.75.

The subject matter of this volume has been prepared by 16 well qualified pediatric allergists, all of whom are connected with pediatric departments in large universities or teaching hospitals, located in various sections of the United States, where they have the opportunity of seeing large numbers of allergic children.

In the reviewer's opinion, this book is invaluable to the pediatrician, for it is a well recognized fact that he is dealing with allergic conditions in from 30 to 50 per cent of his patients, depending on the locale in which he is practicing.

The contents include specialized knowledge of the fundamentals of allergy, and present well organized discussions on accepted methods of investigation and treatment. Several chapters merit special comment. Dr. Bret Ratner introduces the subject by giving a brief but very comprehensive chapter on "The Genesis of Allergy." The chapter by Dr. M. Murray Peshkin—"Critical Evaluation of Diagnostic Test for Sensitization in Infancy and Childhood," is of particular interest at this time. He clarifies and properly evaluates the role that skin tests play in the study of the allergic child. He discusses each phase of the study in order of its importance, namely: history, physical examination, laboratory procedures for determining endocrine dysfunction, blood studies, x-rays, and lastly, various methods of testing with allergens, including skin tests. Dr. Lewis Webb Hill, in his chapter on "Significance of Skin Tests," also emphasizes the fact that skin tests are helpful but certainly not infallible. Dr. Ben F. Feingold demonstrates with very interesting graphs the dual role infection plays in allergy. He, also, briefly reviews the literature on that subject. The remaining chapters maintain the high standard exemplified by the ones reviewed above. The volume is extraordinarily useful due to the splendid bibliography prepared by each contributor.